

Serial No. 10/667,266**Atty. Doc. No. 2002P02639WOUS****REMARKS**

Claim 7 has been amended and claims 15-22, 24 and 26 have been canceled. No claims have been added. Thus, claims 7-14, 23, and 25 are presented for examination. Applicants respectfully request allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks

Response to Objections to the Claims:

The Examiner objected to claims 15-22, 24, and 26 as substantially duplicate of claims 7-14, 23, and 25. Thus, Applicants have canceled claims 15-22, 24, and 26. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the objections to the specification.

Response to Rejections under Section 102:

Claims 7, 10-15, and 18-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), the Examiner contending that these claims are anticipated by Elam (USPN 4,128,522).

Applicants have amended the claim 7 to recite removing the mask by dry ice blasting (e.g. Page 3 lines 31-32). Elam neither discloses nor suggests such a limitation. Elam discloses removing the maskant with a tool such as a hammer, using a scrapping device, peeling, or using grit blasting (USPN 4,128,522 column 4, lines 62-68) 24. Using dry ice blasting to remove the maskant helps to remove contaminants from the component due to the high velocity of airflow. In contrast, grit blasting may leave contaminants on the component. Furthermore, dry ice blasting can reach surfaces that may be difficult to get to with a hammer, scrapping device, or for peeling.

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In view of the above, independent claim 7 is patentable. Dependent claims 8-14, 23, and 25 are also patentable at least based on their dependence from claim 7 as well as based on their own merit. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the Section 102 rejection.

Response to Rejections under Section 103:

Claims 8 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner contending that these claims are obvious over Elam (USPN 4,128,522) in view of Rigney et al. (USPN 6,521,294). Furthermore, claims 9 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the Examiner contending that these claims are obvious over Elam (USPN 4,128,522) in view of Foster et al. (USPN 4,726,104).

For at least the reasons discussed in connection with the Section 102 rejections, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the 103 rejections.

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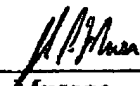
Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the objections and rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the rejections and timely pass the application to allowance.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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